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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Principals and Superintendents  
FROM: Rebecca Holcombe, Secretary of Education  
COPY: Mr. Rob Evans, School Public Safety Officer  
SUBJECT: School Crisis Planning  
DATE: August 2014

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As we head into the coming school year, I want to encourage you to continue the important work that is taking place across Vermont in the area of school crisis planning. In April of this year, the Agency of Education and the Department of Public Safety partnered with Margolis Healy, a professional campus safety and security firm, who will be assisting us with our school crisis planning efforts.

Some of the work in keeping with this initiative is as follows:

- We have developed a school safety blog "Let's Talk About School Safety" located on our web-site (<http://education.vermont.gov/lets-talk-education/safety>);
- We are in the process of planning the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Governor's Conference on School Safety. This is scheduled for November 19, 2014 at the Sheraton Hotel in South Burlington;
- A statewide school safety survey was distributed to get an accurate assessment of our current crisis planning; and
- In July we applied for \$250,000 in federal grants to assist in developing "High Quality School Emergency Operations Plans" in all four corners of our state.

As you begin the school year, I would encourage you to consider the following important safety planning objectives:

1. Ensure you have an emergency operations plan that covers the "reasonable" threats and hazards your school may encounter;
2. Ensure this plan is created and shared with emergency first responders in your local area;
3. Ensure your faculty, staff and student body are aware of this plan and that they are familiar with their roles and responsibilities during a crisis;
4. Conduct your emergency training drills with faculty, staff, students and first responders to ensure they are prepared to respond during a crisis;
5. Continue to broaden the membership of your crisis planning team;
6. Consider developing a behavioral assessment team including outside professionals, who can evaluate potential violent and risky behaviors to determine the credibility of these threats and to ensure the appropriate resources are leveraged to minimize the risks associated with these behaviors.

Please feel free to contact our School Public Safety Officer, Mr. Rob Evans at [revans@margolishealy.com](mailto:revans@margolishealy.com) with any specific questions.